

VENUS and ARDELIA,

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T A L E.

By a Gentleman of OXFORD.

----- *Nos hæc novimus esse nihil.* MART.



L O N D O N :

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VENUS and ARBELLIA

A

T A L E

By a Gentleman of OXFORD.

— The Author's name is not known.



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in the year 1800



VENUS and ARDELIA,

A

T A L E.



RETIRING to a cool retreat,
From sultry summer's noon-
day heat,

As once the smiling queen of love
Reclin'd at ease in IDA's grove,
(Compos'd in gentlest peace of mind,
And free from cares of ev'ry kind)

Pleas'd

Pleas'd with the solitary shade,
 Review'd the triumphs she had made;
 What hearts she lately had subdu'd,
 (To pleasing happy servitude!)
 Where next she would extend her reign,
 On whom confer her wanton chain;
 And who should soon her laws obey,
 Tho' now reluctant to her sway;
 Or where the little prattling loves
 Should now direct her sportive doves:
 Whether on Cyprus * happy isle,
 Or Delta's † she would deign to smile,
 Or favour Britain's for a-while.

* The Island of *Cyprus*, from its Fruitfulness obtain'd
 the Name of the *Happy Isle*.

† *Delta* is an Island form'd by the *Nile*, in which
 stood the City *Nemphis*, (now call'd *Grand Cairo*) where
 was a famous Temple consecrated to *Venus*.

As

As thus she sat in deep debate,
 With all a goddess' pride elate;
 A priest from Paphos' temple came
 To find the Dionean dame.
 Soon as her goddess form he saw,
 He bow'd with reverential awe;
 His fault'ring speech, and forward zeal,
 The sorrows of his heart reveal.
 At length he cry'd, hail mighty queen!
 Who rule to fifty from fifteen;
 Behold thy pow'r is now decay'd,
 Vows seldom at thy temple paid,
 Mankind no more thy aid invoke,
 No victims on thy altars smoke,
 No more the fragrant fumes arise
 In spiry circles to the skies;

B

Some

Some mortal deck'd with all thy charms,
 To love each earth-born bosom warms,
 Of ev'ry pleasing art possess'd,
 With store of sense and beauty blest'd,
 She plainly shows her charms divine;
 Still fees fresh vot'ries at her shrine;
 Retains the old, solicits new,
 And robs thy Paphos of its due.

Enrag'd against the rebel man,
 The Cyprian deity began:

Do mortals then dispute my reign!
 And love's almighty pow'r disdain!
 Where then are all those beauties fled,
 For which so many thousands bled?

Which

Which hurried to untimely fate
 Imperial Illium's warlike state;
 And sent so many sons of Greece
 To rest in everlasting peace.
 In vain the haughty spouse of Jove;
 In vain majestic Pallas strove;
 To me the apple Paris gave,
 To love's diviner pow'r a slave;
 And took, inflam'd by beauty's charms,
 His country's ruin * to his arms.
 A mortal now would vainly strive,
 Who shortly must her charms survive,
 Whate'er her present beauty be,
 Imprudent fair! to rival me.

* Helen the Cause of a long War between the
Greeks and Trojans.

Beauty

Beauty, alas ! too sad a truth !
 Has ever been confin'd to youth :
 Tho' now her cheeks with roses bloom,
 Her breath tho' Araby's perfume,
 Yet soon the summer sun recedes,
 And winter's hoary reign succeeds :
 Thus she must feel th' effects of time,
 While I still flourish in my prime.
 But quick I'll find this mortal clay,
 Who bears such universal sway ;
 Whose smiles mankind so much implore,
 Whose charms so fervently adore.

And soon to know the much-lov'd maid,
 She summon'd Cupid to her aid ;

Soon

Soon as she call'd, her darling pride
 The quiver'd god, was at her side;
 My son, she said, whose mighty sway
 Both gods and goddeffes obey;
 Without whose influ'nce, mortals own
 True happiness is rarely known:
 Assist thy mother's injur'd cause,
 Assert thy violated laws:
 In vain could our united art *
 Enslave Phæniffa's royal heart;
 In vain Appollo's wounded Breast, †
 Thy more unerring dare confest;

* *Magnum & memorabile nomen
 Una dolo divûm, si fœmina victa deorum est.*

VIRG. ÆN. Lib. iv.

† *Certa quidem nostra est, nostrâ tamen una sagitta,
 Certior, in vacuo quæ vulnera pectore fecit.*

OV. MET.

C

Unless,

Unless, my child, you now can know
 Who is this mortal fair below ;
 This all-ador'd, this much-lov'd maid,
 Who proudly scorns thy useless aid,
 And can without one golden dart*
 To ev'ry soul a flame impart :

Quickly her little wanton son,
 Already thought the business done :
 On ev'ry earthly fair intent,
 To lovely *FLAVIA first he went :

For there the graces us'd to sport,
 The love's there kept their wanton court ;

* ——— *Fugat hoc, facit illud amorem,
 Quod facit auratum est & cuspidē fulget acutā.*

Ov. MET.

* Miss C-----H.

There

(II)

There too had frequently been seen,
The Paphian goddess, beauty's queen:
And he himself had deign'd e'er now,
With smiles to fit on FLAVIA's Brow.

As here the god, tho' blind, could trace
Each outward beauty of the face,
He thought he here might likewise find,
Fix'd honour, and a spotless mind.

CUPID, tho' fightless, by his side
Has honour waiting for his guide
Nor will he ever deign to stay
Where honour has not lead the Way.

Fron

From FLAVIA's charms he quickly flew,
To see them † MIRA bloom in you.

Bright MIRA whom no stains disgrace,
A mind still fairer than her face:
In her, admiring, we behold,
A Pallas in a Venus mould;
Beauty and sense their forces join,
Goddeſs without, within divine.
With charms that to the chafteſt heart,
Might ev'ry ſoft deſire impart;
Virtue and ſenſe that might controul
The looſeſt wiſhes of the ſoul,

† The Right Hon. the Counteſs of C-----D.

O bleſſ'd

O blest with ev'ry art to please!
 To temper dignity with ease
 In ev'ry habitude of life,
 The friend, the parent, or the wife:
 With all thy sex's virtues crown'd!
 Without one female folly found!

Oh how unlike that senseless race,
 Whose little merit is a face!
 Whom booby heirs perhaps caress,
 Whose sense and taste shines forth in dress:
 Happy if such their charms rehearse,
 In scraps of plays, and ends of verse!
 Poor flutt'ring things! they idly prate,
 And too contemptible for hate,

D

In

In rounds of follies, thoughtless play
The fleeting trifle, life, away.

With secret pleasure CUPID saw
A human form without a flaw;
And knew on this he might rely,
That MIRA could with VENUS vie:
Yet e'er to Ida's top he flew,
Resolv'd to take one parting view,
He saw an infant in her arms,
The emblem of its mother's charms,
And quickly found her ruling care,
Her chief concern was center'd there:
Coxcombs he saw she could despise,
The empty victims of her eyes,

And

And pleas'd observ'd, tho' to his cost,
The woman in the parent lost.

Amaz'd he went to STELLA's * gate,
But ah! he rather came too late;
The gods who long with envy view'd,
Each heart by STELLA's charms subdu'd;
At length determin'd to displace
The outward beauties of her face:
But left her still a just pretence,
To ev'ry virtue, wit, and sense:
Of noble blood, in honour clear,
And tho' a woman, yet sincere;
Not over grave, nor idly gay,
Chaste as the morn, and mild as May:

* The Right Honourable Lady M---y P-----s.

In

In pleasing converse oft I've known
 Her virtues as a sister shown;
 By him † whose nature all commend,
 My other, better-self, my friend.

Such were fair SPELLA's charms, but these
 The vulgar herd can never please,
 Who merit in a feature find,
 Nor think it center'd in the mind.

The god in air now took his flight,
 Uncertain where he next should light;
 At length he perch'd on DELIA's † breast:
 There ev'ry folly stood confest;

* The Honourable R——T B———LL.

† The Right Hon. Lady C——A B———T.

In

In one united there he view'd,
 The gay coquette, the awkward prude;
 Amazing destiny of heav'n!
 Where almost ev'ry charm is giv'n,
 Where beauty, and where love preside,
 That common-sense should be deny'd.

The god too look'd in SYLVIA'S * heart,
 SYLVIA was pretty, and was smart;
 But if the truth we may unfold,
 Why! SYLVIA now is rather old.

BELINDA† next his notice claim'd,
 For manly sense, and knowledge fam'd;

* Miss P-----y B-----s.

† The Right Hon. the Countess of A-----y.

E

BELINDA

BELINDA, prudent, good, and wife ;
 Virtues the modern world despise :
 Or CUPID'S toils had been compleat,
 When first he pitch'd at MIRA'S feet.

Thrice had Aurora's chearful ray,
 With smiles fortold the coming day,
 And thrice the sun's declining height,
 Had yielded to the pow'r of night :

When LOVE with various cares oppress'd,
 Had gently laid him down to rest ;
 Where learned Cam's luxuriant stream,
 So frequently the poet's theme,
 Thro' winding valleys softly glides,
 In sacred verse-inspiring tides :

Nor

Nor flows a stream more noble, save
 Beauteous Ifis' more admir'd wave:
 For her my fond officious care,
 Shall ev'ry lawrel wreath prepare,
 While smiling, she will not disdain,
 To see me number'd in her train,
 And with some small poetic fire,
 Her last, her meanest son, inspire.

Scarce was CUPID's anxious breast
 By pleasing Morpheus sooth'd to rest;
 When tender griefs, pathetick woes,
 Disturb'd the weary'd god's repose:
 Amaz'd he heard each youthful swain,
 Of love's resistless pow'r complain,

And

And thousands own in am'rous sighs,
 The brightness of ARDELIA'S * eyes:
 Some lavish'd praises on her face,
 Admiring ev'ry outward grace;
 And those whom beauty could not bind,
 Fell victims to a heav'nly mind:
 Thus each from bright ARDELIA'S charms
 Acknowledg'd love's divine alarms.

The god freight flew to find the fair
 Who thus could ev'ry heart insnare;
 That yet unheard-of pow'r to view,
 Which now the world in bondage drew:

Soon as he saw the lovely maid
 In all his mother's charms array'd,

* Miss P-----N.

He

He knew ARDELIA was the dame,
(So soft her air, so nice her frame)
He oft in vain had hop'd to find,
The wish and torment of mankind!

No longer now compell'd to rove,
With joy he went to Ida's grove:
There told his mother he had found
The fair with ev'ry beauty crown'd;
The maid who rival'd her in fame,
And that ARDELIA was her name.

Fill'd with revenge the goddess flies
To Jove, the sov'reign of the skies;
Just as she enter'd heav'n's high gate,
The god's were met in deep debate;

At Jove's right-hand she took her place,
 To him she offer'd up her case;
 Told how her pow'r was now disdain'd,
 What victories ARDELIA gain'd;
 She humbly hop'd for some relief,
 And drop't a tear to shew her grief:

Happy to see his daughter's guile,
 The Thund'rer * kiss'd her with a smile;
 Streight all Olympus grew serene,
 No low'ring gloomy cloud was seen;
 Each ruder breath of air appeas'd,
 Proclaim'd the king of heav'n was pleas'd.

* *Olli subridens hominum sator atque deorum
 Vultu quo cælum, tempestatesque serenat,
 Oscula libavit natae.*

My

My child, he said, dispel your fears,
 Nor stain celestial eyes with tears;
 I view with pitty your distress,
 And fain would give you some redress;
 But must acquaint you with regret,
 The gods who late in council met,
 Agreed to form some human clay,
 Pure, spotless, and without allay;
 With one consent resolv'd to know
 How far their utmost art could go;
 That to compleat the great design,
 They cast it in a mould divine;
 And that the happy mixture fram'd,
 Had been by heav'n ARDELIA nam'd;
 APOLLO owns to her belong,
 Each pow'r of music and of song;

To

To her, the chaste MINERVA gave
 The art to make mankind her slave;
 With judgment to direct each glance,
 And move majestic in the dance.
 She knew, that what the god's ordain,
 Must ever (fix'd as fate) remain:
 Nor force can change, nor art evade,
 What heav'n immutable has made.

The Cyprian deity amaz'd,
 By JOVE to hear ARDELIA prais'd,
 And vex'd that to the beauteous fair,
 (Bright mark of heav'n's peculiar care)
 Superior merit should be giv'n,
 Harbours'd her doves and flew from heav'n.

F I N I S.